IN THE HIGH COURT OF GUJARAT AT AHMEDABAD

SPECIAL CIVIL APPLICATION No 8626 of 2002

For Approval and Signature:

Hon'ble MR.JUSTICE P.B.MAJMUDAR

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1. Whether Reporters of Local Papers may be allowed to see the judgment? : NO

2. To be referred to the Reporter or not? : NO

3. Whether Their Lordships wish to see the fair copy of the judgement? : NO

4. Whether this case involves a substantial question of law as to the interpretation of the Constitution of India, 1950 of any Order made thereunder? : NO

5. Whether it is to be circulated to the concerned Magistrate/Magistrates,Judge/Judges,Tribunal/Tribunals? : NO

JASHPAL DEVRAJ BHATIA

Versus

STATE OF GUJARAT

Appearance: MS SUBHADRA G PATEL for the Petitioner.
Mr.M.K.Patel, Assistant GOVERNMENT PLEADER,
for Respondent No. 1-3

CORAM : MR.JUSTICE P.B.MAJMUDAR

Date of decision: 04/03/2003

ORAL JUDGEMENT

The petitioner-detenu has challenged the detention order dated 24.7.2002, by which he is detained as a 'Bootlegger' under the provisions of the Gujarat Prevention of Anti-Social Activities Act, 1988 ("PASA", for short). Along with the detention order, he is also served with the grounds of detention of the said date. In the said grounds, there is a mention about two criminal cases under the Bombay Prohibition Act, the authority, after considering the aforesaid two cases and after considering the statements of witnesses, has passed the aforesaid detention order against the petitioner,

which is impugned at the instance of the detenu in this petition.

At the time of hearing of this petition, learned Advocate for the petitioner submitted that, even though, at the relevant time, the petitioner was already in judicial custody in connection with the case at serial No.2, yet, the authority has not appropriately considered as to why it is necessary to detain him under preventive detention. The Detaining Authority has merely mentioned that the petitioner is in judicial custody, but, he may be released on bail at any point of time and, thereafter, he may continue the said activity again. At this stage, reference is required to be made to the judgment of the Apex Court in Amritlal & Others v. Union Government and others, AIR 2000 SC 3675, wherein the Apex Court held as under :-

> " ... ...
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> 4. In Agustin's decision (1994 Supp (1) SCC 597) (supra) this Court also placed strong reliance on an earlier but oft-cited decision of this Court in Binod Singh v. District Magistrate, Dhanbad, (1986) 4 SCC 416 : (AIR 1986 SC 2090 : 1986 Cri LJ 1959) wherein it was held that if a person is in custody and there is no imminent possibility of his being released therefrom, the power of detention should not ordinarily be exercised. This Court held that there must be cogent materials before the officer passing the detention order that the detenu is likely to be released on bail. The inference must be drawn from the available material on record and must not be the ipse dixit of the officer passing the order of detention. It is in this perspective as above, that the recording of the concerned officer in the matter under reference ought to be noticed and the same reads as below :-
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> "Even though prosecution proceedings under Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985 have been initiated against Shri Amritlal I am satisfied that there is compelling necessity in

> view of the likelihood of his moving an application for bail and in the event of his being granted bail, the likelihood of his indulging in illicit traffic in narcotic drugs as is evident from the trend of his activities, to detain him under the Prevention of Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1988."
>
> xxx xxx xxx
>
> 6. The requirement as noticed above in Binod Singh's case (AIR 1986 SC 2090 : 1986 Cri LJ 1959) (supra) that there is 'likelihood of the petitioners being released on bail' that however is not available in the reasonings as provided by the concerned officer. The reasoning available is the 'likelihood of his moving an application for bail' which is different from 'likelihood to be released on bail.' This reasoning, in our view, is not sufficient compliance with the requirements as laid down.
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> 7. The emphasis however, in Binod Singh's case (supra) that before passing the detention order the concerned authority must satisfy himself of the likelihood of the petitioner being released on bail and that satisfaction ought to be reached on cogent material. Available cogent material is the likelihood of having a bail application moved in the matter but not obtaining a bail order.
>
> ... ..."

In the instant case, the Detaining Authority has not signified as to on what basis he has reached the satisfaction that the petitioner may be released on bail at any point of time. He has not discussed any material on this aspect for reaching the said conclusion. There is nothing on record that even any bail application is filed by by the petitioner. In view of the aforesaid judgment of the Apex Court, the order of detention is required to be set aside.

This petition is accordingly allowed. The order of detention is quashed and set aside. It is ordered that the detenu be released forthwith unless he is required in connection with any other case. Rule is made absolute.

4th March, 2003 (P.B. Majmudar, J.)

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(apj)